The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Spirit divine, attend our prayer,
And make our hearts thy home;
Descend with all thy gracious powers,—
Oh, come, great Spirit, come!

Come, as the light! To us reveal
The truth we long to know,
And lead us in the path of life
Where all the righteous go.

Come as the fire! and purge our hearts
Like sacrificial flame,
Till our whole souls an offering be
In love's redeeming name.

Come as the dew! and sweetly bless
This consecrated hour,
Till every barren place shall own
With joy thy quickening power.

Come, as the wind, O breath of God,
O Pentecostal grace!
Come, make the great salvation known
Wide as the human race.

—*Andrew Reed.*

SELF-CONSECRATION.

III.

But it is not in the one act alone that such sacrifice is accomplished. When the high inspiration of communion has passed away into the recesses of memory; when the tumultuous joy ceases to throb in the heart, and man is compelled to turn his gaze back from heaven to earth, and descend from the "Delectable Mountains," whence Paradise seemed so near, to tread with downcast eyes and narrowed vision the path of that *duty* he has chosen,—it is *then* that the sacrifice becomes a reality; then, when he no longer bows on the steps of God's altar, but when his heart lies on its marble surface, bare and bleeding. Who envies not Curtius leaping down the Forum's gulf, while yet the sunlight glittered on his crest and the shout of Rome redeemed rang through the echoing abyss? Who shudders not at his destiny when he lies mangled in the silent depths of the terror-haunted pit, waiting in his living grave the slow release of death?

We often forget these things when we think of self-sacrifice. We forget that all the real trial lies before us, even when that grand resolve has stung our souls. There is the actual self-denial or suffering, commonly greater than we anticipated; and there is, further, the natural decline and reaction from the fervid feelings in whose white heat the resolution was stricken out. The order of Providence seems to demand that we should thus *choose* the narrow way, in the noontide of spiritual light, and be called to *tread* it when our sun lies hid beneath the horizon of immediate consciousness. It was not when God's angel thoughts were around him, and he took freely his cup of agony from his Father's hand, that the Christ achieved his everlasting crown. It was when the death-darkness mounted slowly up the cross till heart and brain grew dim, and God's face was hid, and the cry burst from his soul, "Why hast thou forsaken me?"

And in other and lesser martyrdoms than that of Calvary it is equally true that the sacrifice lies in the slow completion of the self-abnegation, and not in the first oblation. When the exile for conscience' sake stands on the heaving deck, still beholding his loved ones waving their last farewell, and feeling their tears yet warm upon his cheek, his sacrifice is but prepared. When the long years of mind and heart solitude have stolen the vigor from his brain, and filled with sickly longings the void in his affections, when the weary life is drawing to a lonely close, *then*, if his soul be kneeling still, laying *willingly* still its great gift on the altar, then is his sacrifice truly made to God. And thus, too, must be fulfilled all sacrifices,—freely, cheerfully, *to the end;* for it is in the *perseverance* that lies the sacrifice. And herein, too, may lie its joy and glory. Each moment that the soul resists the temptation to regret, and renews in spirit its vows of sacrifice as freely as at first, it actually accomplishes its act of virtue. It is marching forward in its path, and not merely, as it sometimes seems, standing still on the barren rock whither a wave of resolution has borne it.

Perfect self-consecration to God would be a life of absolute virtue, absolute religion. It is not in a finite creature's power to accomplish this perfectly; but it is so to resolve on doing it to the utmost of each day and hour's growing power. It remains only for each human heart to decide whether it will exert the grandest prerogative of its freedom, and give itself thus to God.

I believe that a vast preponderance of the evil of the world results from the *incompleteness* of men's choice of virtue far more than from their deliberate selection of the path of vice. Among minds not grossly depraved,—not entangled in any special webs of passion or deception,—it cannot, I think, be questioned that the ordinary condition of the will is one of partial virtuous energy, accompanied by a more or less decided intention of becoming eventually altogether moral and religious. Here, however, the virtue stops. We say with Saint Augustine, "Make me holy, *but not yet.*" Reservations lie latent in the mind concerning some unhallowed sentiments or habits in the present, some possibly impending temptations in the future; and thus do we cheat ourselves of inward and outward joys together.

We give up many an indulgence for conscience' sake, but stop short at that point of entire faithfulness wherein conscience could reward us. It is said that a man may walk unhurt through a furnace chamber, wherein, if he place one limb alone, it will be scorched to torture. Thus do we feel double pain in the sacrifices which are but partial, and in which our whole heart never enters, and whereby therefore it is never warmed. If we would but give ourselves wholly to God,—give up, for the present and the future, every act and, above all, every thought and every feeling, to be all purified to the uttermost, and rendered the best, noblest, holiest, we can conceive,—then would sacrifice bear with it a peace rendering itself, I truly believe, far *easier* than before.

There is nothing unnatural in such idea of entire self-sacrifice. When we are asked to make it for God's sake, we treat it as if it were an achievement of almost superhuman magnitude. But does not that human affection which it is almost profane to bring into competition with the love of God, does not the commonest conjugal attachment lead thousands of men and women every year to forsake father and mother, home and country, wealth, ambition, friends,—in a word, to make enormous sacrifices for a simple affection, too often undignified by any moral grandeur, and ever incapable of affording joys comparable to those of religious devotion? Nay, human love often makes sacrifices which can never be demanded by religion. It can give up its *own* joys, the presence and even the love of its object, for his sake. But, the farther we journey on the path of divine sacrifice, the nearer we every day draw to him for whom we make it. We are sure that he sees every pang, and that he will give us more and more of the sense of his love for every effort we make to deserve it.—*Frances Power Cobbe, in "Religious Duty."*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE UNFAILING ONE.

He who hath led will lead
All through the wilderness;
He who hath fed will feed;
He who hath blessed will bless;
He who hath heard thy cry
Will never close his ear;
He who hath marked thy faintest sigh
Will not forget thy tear.

He loveth always, faileth never;
So rest on Him, to-day, forever.

He who hath made thee whole
Will heal thee, day by day;
He who hath spoken to thy soul
Hath many things to say.
He who hath gently taught
Yet more will make thee know;
He who so wondrously hath wrought
Yet greater things will show.
He loveth always, faileth never;
So rest on Him, to-day, forever.

He who hath made thee nigh,
Will draw thee nearer still;
He who hath given the first supply
Will satisfy and fill;
He who hath given thee grace
Yet more and more will send;
He who hath set thee in the race
Will speed thee to the end.
He loveth always, faileth never;
So rest on Him, to-day, forever.

He who hath won thy heart
Will keep it true and free;
He who hath shown thee what thou art
Will show Himself to thee.
He who hath bid thee live,
And made thy life His own,
Life more abundantly will give
And keep it His alone.
He loveth always, faileth never;
So rest on Him, to-day, forever.

Then trust Him for to-day
As thine unfailing friend,
And let Him lead thee all the way,
Who loveth to the end;
And let the morrow rest
In His beloved hand.
His good is better than our best
As we shall understand,
If, trusting Him who faileth never,
We rest on Him, to-day, forever.

—*Frances Ridley Havergal.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.*]

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I shall be glad to get the "Roman Empire," by Gibbon, some five volumes. Also Hume's "History of England," Macaulay's "History of England," and Rawlinson's "Seven Great Monarchies." Rev. J. H. Shuford, Blackstone, North Carolina.

2. Mrs. Jennie L. Pleasants, Experiment, Virginia, asks for "Robinson Crusoe" and "Pilgrim's Progress."

3. Harry B. Cecil, Unadilla, Otsego County, New York, will be grateful for "The Childhood of Religions," and "The Childhood of the World," by Edward Clodd.

4. I am an orphan girl, and it is hard for me to get my school-books. I would be glad to get Jones's "School History" and Krohn's "First Lessons in Hygiene." If any one can send them to me, I'll be so grateful, and will do my best studying. Address, Ela Grant, Sandidges, Virginia, Box 20, R. F. D. No. 2.

5. I am an only child, and we live in Roanoke, having lived here only a short while, and are situated among strangers. I miss the country so much (my former home), I would be glad to receive any good reading matter, as my father is not able to buy books. I am a member of the Methodist Church. I was eighteen years of age the 7th of July, and would be glad to have a correspondent near my age (Miss) Lucy E. Pollard, Luck Avenue, S.W Roanoke, Virginia.

6. Mrs. R. C. Duval, Locust Grove Orange County, Virginia, will be very grateful for any of the following poems and books, for her boys to use in school this season. *For Study:* Chaucer's "Prologue"; Shakespeare's "Hamlet"; Milton's "Paradise Lost" (two books); Dryden's "Alexander's Feast"; Pope's "Ode to Saint Cecilia"; Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard"; Goldsmith's "Deserted Village"; Burns's "Cotter's Saturday Night" and "Tam o'Shanter"; Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality"; Coleridge's "Christabel"; Shelley's "Ode to the Skylark" and "The Sensitive Plant"; Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes"; Byron's "Childe Harold"; Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra" and "Saul"; Poe's "Raven"; Lamb's "Essays" (selected); Arnold's "Sohrab" and "Rustum"; Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies" ("In the King's Garden," "Of the Queen's Treasures"); Emerson's "Essays on Compensation and Self-reliance." *For Reading:* Three of Shakespeare's plays (optional) ; Goldsmith's "The Vicar of Wakefield"; Johnson's "Rasselas"; Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" (Voyages I. and II.); Scott's "Ivanhoe"; George Eliot's "Silas Marner."

7. My sister, Mrs. Nell Williamson, Tellico Plains, Tennessee, wishes to join your Cheerful Letter Club, and will be glad to receive any books or magazines. Will pass all reading on to others. I shall be very grateful if some one will send me Mrs. Browning's or Keats's Poems. Mrs. Lulu Shearer, Farner, Tennessee.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JACOB ABBOTT:
HIS HAPPY METHODS WITH CHILDREN.

By Lyman Abbott.

All good men love children, but my father not only loved, he respected them. This respect which he had for children was, I think, the secret of his power over them, which was quite as remarkable as his literary success in writing for them. In a true sense it might be said that he treated children as his equals, not through any device or from any scheme, but spontaneously and naturally.

He never deceived children, never tricked them with cunning devices, never lied to them. This may seem small praise, yet men—and for that matter, women—who never lie to children are, I am afraid, a rather small minority. A promise to a child was quite as sacred in his eyes as a promise to a grown person. He would as soon have thought of defaulting on a promisory note as defaulting on a promise to a child. He trusted the judgment of children, took counsel with them, not in a false pretence, but in reality, and in all the matters which concerned them and their world was largely governed by their judgments. He threw responsibility upon them, great responsibility, and they knew it. The audacity of his confidence surprises me even now, as I look back upon it. I entered college before I was fourteen. My father not only let me choose the college for myself, but made me decide for myself whether I would go to college. When the time for entrance examinations approached, he called me to him, told me that, if I went into business as an errand boy, he would lay up for me every year what the college life would cost him, so that at eighteen I should have a capital of two thousand dollars and interest. Thus I not only had to decide that I would go to college, but also had to decide that I was willing to give up two thousand dollars for a college education; and two thousand dollars was a large sum to my boyish mind But, as a result, I took college life with great seriousness, quite resolved to get the two thousand dollars' value out of the education. This act was quite characteristic of my father. Though he was my wisest counsellor, I cannot remember that he ever gave me a definite and specific piece of advice. He put questions before me with great clearness, summed up the pros and cons like a judge upon the bench, and then left me to be the final arbiter.

This respect which he showed to children inspired them with respect for themselves and for one another. It gave dignity to the children who came under his influence. That influence was a masterful one. I should misrepresent him if I gave the impression that he exercised no authority. On the contrary, his authority was supreme and final. He gave few commands, but he required prompt, implicit, and unquestioning obedience to those which he did give. I have known children to disobey him, but I never knew one to rebel against him. I do not know what would have happened in case of a rebellion. I think no child ever thought of it as possible. I never knew him to strike a blow. I do not recall that he ever sent a child to his room, or supperless to bed, or set him to write in his copy-book, or to learn tasks, or resorted to any other of the similar expedients, necessary perhaps in school, and frequent in most families. In general, he simply administered natural penalties. If a child lied or broke his promises, he was distrusted. If he was careless or negligent, the things which were given to other children to play with were withheld from him. If he quarrelled, he was taken away from his playmates, but made as happy as he could be in solitude. The children were themselves encouraged to inflict a kind of child penalty. In the yard at Fewacres, his country home, which was a favorite playground for invited children from the village, as well as for his own grandchildren, he had a square stone set up. Then he said: "If any child gets cross and sulky and cries, he can go and sit on the 'crying stone' just as long as he wants to, and cry it out." Whenever any child did grow sulky and cross, all the rest of the children clamored: "To the crying stone, to the crying stone!" and it is needless to say that it was rarely the case that a child took ad-

vantage of the prerogative thus afforded him. This little incident I recall simply because it is significant of my father's methods with children. He distinguished sharply, and the children quickly learned to distinguish between advice and law. When he gave advice, the child was perfectly at liberty to regard it or disregard it, as he pleased, and, after disregarding it, fell into no disrepute or disfavor of any kind. But law, when it was issued, which was not often, must be at once obeyed without hesitation and without question. He approved and encouraged independence and self-confidence in children, but he required prompt and unhesitating obedience.

This spirit of respect which my father had for children interprets his literary method. He never condescended to children, never talked down to them or wrote down to them. He believed they could understand large truths if they were simply and clearly stated. So in "Science for the Young" he dealt with some of the most interesting scientific phenomena. In his Red Histories he used biography to make clear the great historical epochs. In his "Young Christian" he interpreted the profound phases of spiritual experience. This spirit of confidence determined his style. He never sought for short and easy words, but selected what he thought the best word to express his meaning. "The child," he said, "will get the meaning of the word from the context, or, if he does not, he will ask his mother what the word means and so he will be learning language." He did not write books about children for grown people to read. He wrote books for children because he shared their life with them. Perhaps it is a son's prejudice, but his books still seem to me to be among the best of true children's books.

I have been often asked which one of his four sons was *Rollo*. The answer is, none of them. So far as I know, my father never painted a portrait, never took a single child out of real life and set him in a story. So far as I know, he never made a study of character in one of his books, never undertook to work out through fiction the development of a character first philosophically conceived. He wrote his stories as he might have told them. If shorthand had been in vogue in his time, and one could have taken down any story of my father's as he might have told it to a group of children gathered about his chair, it would have been essentially the story as it is published from his pen. He did not form a plot beforehand. Each incident led on to the next incident: it might almost be said that each paragraph led on to the next paragraph; and, when the allotted number of pages was finished, the story came to its end much as the story-telling would come to an end when the clock hand pointed to nine and it was time for the children to go to bed. This method accounts for the artlessness of his narratives. They are natural portrayals of child life to children. The only approximation to portrait painting is in "Jonas," "Beechnut," and "Timboo." These characters in his stories used the devices, employed the methods, manifested the spirit, which were characteristic of his dealing with children. To this extent, and to this only, can they be called portraits; for in every other respect they are unlike one another and quite unlike him.—*From "Good Housekeeping."*

MORE ABOUT PUSSY.

MRS. WISTER'S CATS.

Another error about cats, and a truly vulgar one, is that they lie on young children's breasts and suck their breath or suffocate them. Cats like to lie on the breast of a person they love, and are apt to show their happiness by now and then lifting their heads for a kiss, or gently touching the face or neck above them with their paw. This soft patting or stroking a beloved cheek or throat is one of the more human habits which dogs have not. Seeing one of our cats lying on her master's chest when he was asleep on the sofa, I understand how the notion had taken root: then, too, cats are luxurious and fond of warmth, and may sometimes share a baby's crib or cradle for that reason, as dogs certainly do.

Respect for slumber is a most curious characteristic of cats, and I have often wondered whether it is the same instinct which is said to prevent lions and tigers from attacking sleeping prey. Certainly no cat of mine after kittenhood, except the simpleton Squall, ever woke anybody in the house deliberately; and I have waked innumerable times to find one sitting beside me, waiting patiently until I should rouse to let her out of the room. When Princess was a young kitten, one of her pretty ways was to tap my eyelids lightly

if I were asleep and she wished to play or be petted. But she soon outgrew this without training, and her consideration was shown in one very remarkable way. She knew the relation of the outside of the house to the inside thoroughly, and, if she could not get in, would come and mew under the window of the room I habitually occupied at that time of day; and, as I sat in the library, in a morning-room, and in the drawing-room at different hours, this was a proof of much observation. She knew even the hour of my daily visit to the store-room, which was on the ground floor, and often sprang upon the window-sill when I was within.

Up to the time when poor M'liss and Squall were killed in the same night by strange dogs, which cross the place in bands during August and September (no doubt in pursuit of ground game), the cats were allowed to stay out of doors in the warm moonlight, which they love. Princess always wished to come in early in the morning, and she used to stand under my bedroom window, with the concentrated wistfulness and expectation which belonged to her face. If I were not up and did not wish to rise, the mew would be repeated once or twice, more softly each time, finally *pianissimo*, and then would be heard no more. I had the curiosity to watch her several times through the Venetian shutters, and saw that after the third mew she went away. As she could make herself heard through closed sashes, if she chose, and had no scruple about lifting her voice, I could not but think that she believed me to be asleep, and would not rouse me, which nothing would tempt her to do if she were in my room.

Cats differ as much as human beings in the quality of their voices and in their talkativeness; and, as far as my observation goes, the finest bred have the least to say. Princess and her immediate descendants were talkers; they always mewed for what they wanted, and in response to a greeting or question; and they asked many questions, the drift of which we could not always catch, with unmistakable interrogation in the tone. She and M'liss, who was a chatterbox after her kind, both had a habit of making little conversational sounds in the throat, as many dogs have, especially when much petted: they would keep up this *sotto voce* communication for ten or fifteen minutes, much to our perplexity, though it sometimes evidently expressed affection or a wish for sympathy. They had great variety of inflections in talking to their kittens, and many of them were tender and even musical, like the chirp of a bird. M'liss had a cheerful mew, particularly in bidding one good-morning; but some cats have always a tone of complaint. Most of mine acknowledge any little service, such as bringing food or opening a door, by a mew of gratitude.

My first acquaintance with a silent cat was in Paris, which abounds in fine cats. He was a magnificent white Persian at the Hôtel du Rhin, living with the *concierge*, who said he was eighteen years old, and apparently belonged to nobody. After I had stopped to speak to him once or twice as I went in and out, he came to the door of our apartment in the second story and scratched, after which he paid us a visit every evening for some time. He never mewed for anything unless he could attract attention in no other way. One evening he found a tiny Angora kitten on the table, and, after looking at her for a moment, he hissed, went to the door to be let out, and did not come to see us again.

This kitten was Czarina, who had been bought at a shop in the Rue Castiglione. Having exhausted the list of white names—Blanche, Daisy, Snowdrop, Flake, Lily, Swansdown—and of descriptive ones, such as Fluff, Floss, and Plush, I named this minute object the White Czarina,—called Zara for short,—and with her we entered upon a series of Eastern names,—Zuleika, Fatima, Lalla Rookh, Omar, Saadi, and others.

Czarina was, without exception, the most exquisite cat I have ever seen,—small, but in perfect symmetry, with the marks of pure breeding in the highest degree; a rather squirrel-shaped face, broad and short; very large eyes, amber-colored when she was well and happy, with pupils constantly dilated, faded green when ill in mind or body; small pale pink ears, as thin as tissue-paper, with a little tuft at the point; very long whiskers, small paws, with big boots and a ruff, very thick hair, almost as fine as cobweb, blowing about in every breeze, and so long that it parted naturally from between the shoulders to the end of her tail, the tail itself resembling a squirrel's and an ostrich feather. To this beauty she added extraor-

dinary grace, delicacy, refinement, and many bewitching little airs and poses. Like Princess, she ate with singular nicety, not splashing or spattering the milk as she lapped, or pulling the meat off the plate. Although she was not much given to licking herself, and hated to be washed, she could not endure being dirty, and, as I have said, would come for a bath of her own accord. When fresh washed, she looked like a bunch of fleecy white chrysanthemums.

From the moment she was taken from her cage in the window of the shop, amid lapdogs, marmosets, paroquets, and lovebirds, and put into my arms, she fastened herself to me with a love that was stronger than instinct, and in which her life was bound up. She was so small that I never could judge exactly of her age, but she had been taken too young from her mother, and had a chronic complaint which threatened to kill her. Though too weak to stand, she seemed perfectly contented to lie curled in the palm of my hand, interrupting her continuous purr now and then to lick it.

Being unable to cure her, I took her to a cat doctor's, where I was obliged to leave her, as she required treatment she could not receive at a hotel. I had then owned her less than a fortnight, and she remained with him six weeks, during which time I saw her but twice. She remembered me, and showed joy at seeing me, and delight when I took her back. She did not recover entirely for some months, and always remained delicate and liable to illness.

(To be continued.)

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

III.

On the retirement of my nurse the charge of my little person was committed to my mother's maid and housekeeper, Martha Jones. She came to my mother a blooming girl of eighteen, and she died of old age and sorrow when I left Newbridge at my father's death half a century afterward. She was a fine, fair, broad-shouldered woman, with a certain refinement above her class. Her father had been an officer in the army, and she was educated (not very extensively) at some little school in Dublin, where her particular friend was Moore's (the poet's) sister. She used to tell us how Moore as a lad was always contriving to get into the school and romping with the girls. The legend was sufficient verisimilitude to need no confirmation.

At seven I was provided with a nursery governess, and my dear mother's lessons came to an end. So gentle and sweet had they been that I have loved ever since everything she taught me, and have a vivid recollection of the old map book from whence she had herself learned geography, and of Mrs. Trimmer's histories, "Sacred" and "Profane," not forgetting the almost incredibly bad accompanying volumes of woodcuts, with poor Eli a complete smudge, and Sesostris driving the nine kings (with their crowns, of course) harnessed to his chariot. Who would have dreamed we should now possess photos of the mummy of the real Sesostris (Rameses II.), who seemed then quite as mythical a personage as Polyphemus? To remember the hideous aberrations of Art which then illustrated books for children, and compare them to the exquisite pictures in *Little Folks*, is to realize one of the many changes the world has seen since my childhood. Mrs. Trimmer's books cost, I remember being told, *ten shillings* apiece! My governess's, Miss Kinnear's, lessons, though not very severe (our old doctor—bless him for it!—solemnly advised that I should never be called upon to study after twelve o'clock) were far from being as attractive as those of my mother; and, as soon as I learned to write, I drew on the gravel walk this, as I conceived, deeply touching and impressive sentence: "*Lessons! Thou tyrant of the mind!*" I could not at all understand my mother's hilarity over this inscription, which proved so convincingly my need, at all events, of those particular lessons of which Lindley Murray was the author. I envied the peacock who could sit all day in the sun, and who ate bowlsful of the griddle-bread of which I was so fond, and never was expected to learn anything! Poor bird, he came to a sad end! A dog terrified him one day, and he took a great flight, and was observed to go into one of the tall limes near the house, but was never seen alive again. When the leaves fell in the autumn, the rain-washed feathers and skeleton of poor Pe-ho were found wedged in the fork of the tree. He had met the fate of "Lost Sir Massingberd."

My seventh year was spent with my parents at Bath, where we had a house for the winter in James's Square, where brothers and cousins came for the holidays; and in

London, where I well remember going with my mother to see the Diorama in the Coliseum in Regent's Park of St. Peter's, and a Swiss Cottage, and the statues of Tam o'Shanter and his wife (which I had implored her to be allowed to see, having imagined them to be living ogres), and vainly entreating to be taken to see the Siamese Twins. This last longing, however, was gratified just thirty years afterward. We travelled back to Ireland, posting all the way to Holyhead by the then new high road, through Wales and over the Menai Bridge. My chief recollection of the long journey is humiliating. A box of Shrewsbury cakes, exactly like those now sold in the town, was bought for me *in situ;* and I was told to bring it over to Ireland to give to my little cousin Charley. I was pleased to give the cakes to Charley; but then Charley was at the moment far away, and the cakes were always at hand in the carriage, and the road was tedious and the cakes delicious. And so it came to pass, somehow, that I broke off first a little bit, and then another day a larger bit, till cake after cake vanished, and with sorrow and shame I was obliged to present the empty box to Charley on my arrival.

This Charley was a dear little boy, and about this date was occasionally my companion. His father, my uncle, was Captain William Cobbe, R.N., who had fought under Nelson, and at the end of the war married and took a house near Newbridge, where he acted as my father's agent. He was a fine, brave fellow, and much beloved by every one. One day, long after his sudden, untimely death, we heard from a coast-guardsman, who had been a sailor in his ship, that he had probably caught the disease of which he died in the performance of a gallant action, of which he had never told any one, even his wife. A man had fallen overboard from his ship one bitterly cold night in the northern seas, near Copenhagen. My uncle, on hearing what had happened, jumped from his warm berth and plunged into the sea, where he succeeded in rescuing the sailor, but, in doing so, caught a chill which eventually shortened his days. He had five children, the eldest being Charley, some months younger than I. When my uncle came over to see his brother and do business, Charley, as he grew old enough to take the walk, was often allowed to come with him; and great was my enjoyment of the unwonted pleasure of a young companion,—considerably greater, I believe, than that of my mother and governess, who justly dreaded the escapades which our fertile little brains rarely failed to devise. We climbed everything climbable by aid of the arrangement that Charley always mounted on my strong shoulders and then helped me up. One day my father said to us: "Children, there is a savage bull come. You must take care not to go near him." Charley and I looked at each other and mutually understood. The next moment we were alone, we whispered, "We must get some hairs of his tail!" and away we scampered till we found the new bull in a shed in the cow-yard. Valiantly we seized the tail, and, as the bull fortunately paid no attention to his Liliputian foes, we escaped in triumph with the hairs. Another time, a lovely April evening, I remember we were told it was damp, and that we must not go out of the house. We had discovered, however, a door leading out upon the roof,—and we agreed that "on" the house could not properly be considered "out" of the house; and very soon we were clambering up the slates, and walking along the parapet at a height of fifty or sixty feet from the ground. My mother, passing through one of the halls, observed a group of servants looking up in evident alarm, and making signs to us to come down. As quickly as her feebleness permitted, she climbed to our door of exit, and called to us over the roofs. Charley and I felt like Adam and Eve on the fatal evening after they had eaten the apple. After dreadful moments of hesitation we came down and received the solemn rebuke and condemnation we deserved. It was not a very severe chastisement allotted to us, though we considered it such. We were told that the game of Pope Joan, promised for the evening, should not be played. That was the severest, if not the only, punishment my mother ever inflicted on me.

On rainy days, when Charley and I were driven to amuse ourselves in the great empty rooms and corridors upstairs, we were wont to discuss profound problems of theology. I remember one conclusion relating thereto, at which we unanimously arrived. Both of us bore the name of "Power" as a second name, in honor of our grandmother, Anne Trench's mother, Fanny Power of Coreen. On this circumstance we founded the certainty that we should both go to heaven,

because we heard it said in church, "The heavens and *all the Powers* therein."

—*Autobiography of Frances Power Cobbe.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

NEWTON, 23d July, 1838.

My dear James,—It is of no use to write to you now; for you will be off before my letter reaches far-off Kentucky, yet for a chance will I risk it. I have not told you that I went over to Cambridge to hear Mr. Emerson preach to the seven forth-going ones, nor how poetico-prophetic was his discourse, what a strain of high music rising from sweet melody to awful grandeur. It was not so much sublime as divine.

I should try to repeat some of it to you; but they will print it, though there seems a question about publishing it. I went there on Wednesday to hear the seven utter themselves, thinking, to be sure, they would shine out souls of fire after such kindling words. But, after Mr. Emerson's ripe thought, their performances seemed somewhat crude and altogether too artless. One little satiric touch of his I must give you. In describing a preacher that he had heard who almost made him resolve never to go to church again, he said: "You would not have known from his discourse that he had ever lived. He was a shadow, a spectre, in his speech. You could not tell whether he had a father or a child, whether he had ever loved, whether he had ever bought or taught, or felt fear or joy. It was a snow-storm, and the flakes falling past the window behind him gave one a more painful sense of his vacuity; for the snow-storm was real, the man was an empty show. I thought how great was the coherence of forms since the people went to church to hear this, or that their homes must be singularly uninstructive and unentertaining, since they could still attend in the afternoon to hear this thoughtless, clamorous young person."

The various opinions of the sermon were ludicrously discrepant, but the professors united in pronouncing against it. Mr. —— remarked that in his opinion that part of the discourse which was not folly was impiety; which candid criticism was repeated from end to end of Cambridge, till it reached the ears of one who answered it by saying that that part of Mr. ——'s remark which was not ignorance, was malice. Mr. —— thought it eloquent, but of a most dangerous tendency. Mr. —— thought the students abused the privilege of choosing a preacher so much that it should be taken away from them, and Mr. —— said they would see to it that there were no such doings next year, which is very likely. Old Dr. —— shook his head and pronounced that it was exceedingly doubtful whether that could be true. Mr. Stetson and Mr. Francis rejoiced in it.

August 5th.—I put aside this letter, thinking it not worth while to send it to you as you surely would be gone before it arrived; but Samuel received a letter from you yesterday, according to which it may yet find you.

Have you not heard that Mr. Cranch was engaged to supply for you, and left here six or eight weeks since to go to you? Where he is now no one knows. If you still choose it, you might arrange with Mr. Brownson to go if it will not cost him anything; but you had better write to himself to save time. He wanted much to go, I understood, and said that, if no one else could be found, he would think of it again.

Our cousins, Mrs. Ezekiel Freeman and her daughters Alicia and Ann, are here staying with us, and will be here two or three weeks. Constant was ordered to Canada, and could not come with them.

Aunt Julia* has come to Connecticut this summer, and brought her children and her woman Drusilla with her two children, who, with their mother, are made free. Aunt Julia, it is true, owes more than her life—the restoration of her reason—to Drusilla's care, though of the latter obligation she is unaware. But, since she arrived in Derby, Drusilla was taken very ill and is now dying or dead of cancer. If you come that way, do call and see her. She takes great interest in you and reads the *Messenger*.† Likes the articles on miracles, and is a free inquirer and a partial Abolitionist.

There are some very fine young men now in the Divinity School. There is a Mr. Jones Very, now in the school, who is one of those self-sustained individuals somewhat between Mr. Alcott and Mr. Graeter. He is remarkable for always speaking the truth and for believing in an Inward Voice. Then there are Eustis and Waterston, whose unaffected earnestness is admirable, and sev-

* The mother of General Wheeler.

† Mrs. Wheeler, not Drusilla.

eral others, who are in the habit of walking to Concord in parties and spending the day with Mr. Emerson in high debate.

Farewell. I shall see you before you see this, I hope.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

WHAT IS MY THOUGHT LIKE?

No response came to our request for the game, "What is my thought like " but we find the following description in a story which is so bright and interesting that we wish we had room to copy it entire. The family are sitting around the fireplace in a new house which has just been built for them. It seems that one player has a thought, and the others tell her in turn, without knowing what it is, what the object thought of is like, and then find some reason why it is like that.

One night mamma had a thought. Mabel said it was like Harry, Harry said it was like Mabel, and then papa said that it was like mamma.

"My thought," said mamma, "was this house. Mabel, how is this house like Harry?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Oh, they both have a framework, only Harry's is made of bones instead of timber,—yes, the frames have to be strong and of good shape to make the house and Harry look right when they are done."

"Good! Harry, how is the house like Mabel?"

"It took a long time for it to grow, and there's a good deal more to be done to it yet."

"Good, too. Papa, how is it like me?"

"Well, children, I'm not thinking of the bone-and-flesh mamma, but of the character she has built. She has thought about how she wanted to build it, and watched and studied to see how others have built their characters, so that she could copy their good points and avoid their bad ones. She has made a plan and followed it."

"She isn't in a hurry to get things done, but works right along and takes time enough to finish them," said Mabel. "I suppose that my wanting to learn and to do everything in a hurry is like not waiting for the plastering to dry and like putting on all the paint at once."

Harry looked as if he were going to whistle and said, "I'm afraid I'm building me all windows and piazzas, without any chimneys and stairways."

"Shall we give more time to the building of our house of wood and stone or of our bodies, than to building our characters?" asked mamma.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Mabel, "building a character isn't interesting and nice like building a house."

"Isn't it?" asked papa, smiling at mamma over the children's heads. "You just try it and see!"

"You can't build such a jolly open fire as this, in your mind," said Harry.

"How about love fires in the heart?" asked mamma. "Aren't they worth planning and building?"

For answer Mabel and Harry both hugged mamma hard and smiled.

I.

CHARADE.

My *first* has led a blameless life,
He never quarrels with his wife,
His inmost thoughts are free from sin,
He's happy when the tide is in;
He never seeks my *whole* to raise,
His taste is worthy of all praise.
Yet, such existence who would choose to live
Long as my *last* presents alternative?

—*From "A Century of Charades."*

II.

MORE HIDDEN FISHES.

1. See what a lovely crocus Kate sent me!
2. Iris had her hat trimmed with dandelions.
3. Kate had dock leaves around the crown of her hat.
4. He sat in the sun, fishing all day.
5. Kate has peanut candy, Iris has almond paste.
6. Mary sent her ring to the jewelers to be enlarged.

—*The Invalid Lady.*

III.

CHARADE.

A friend of mine sailed over the sea,
'Twas her *first* to go to my *whole;*
Second, she makes a good little wife,
A happy little soul.
By *first* she found a husband good,

A charming home as well,
And everything her heart can wish
As *second* to you I tell.
My *whole* was the scene of a dreadful story,
Of which the details are sad and gory.

—*Every Other Sunday.*

IV.

HOW MANY?

A farmer had $100 to buy 100 animals. He paid $10 apiece for cows, $3 for sheep, and 50 cents for pigs. How many of each kind?

—*Contributed.*

V

CONUNDRUMS.

1. When will there be only two vowels?
2. What step would you take to get out of the way of an automobile?
3. What man is often asked to marry, seldom refuses, and never does marry?

—*Original and Selected.*

VI.

PRIZE CONTEST.

For the two best lists of words made from the letters of the word

ORGANDIE.

We will give either "The Oiled Feather" or "Lill's Withered Hand," story booklets. Send in the answers before the 1st of November, written on one side of the paper. Any or all of the letters may be used, but no letter must be used twice in the same word. Foreign words and names may be used, but no contractions. Arrange the words alphabetically. Penmanship, spelling, and proper arrangement will be taken into consideration in awarding the prizes. Tell us, when you send the list, which story you wish for. If preferred, we will give one of J. M. Barrie's two novels in paper covers.

Answers to Puzzles in September Number.

I. Let us not be weary in well-doing.
II. David.
III. Stake (Steak.)
IV. Cheese.
V. 1. Alma. 2. Amanda. 3. Adelina. 4. Mary. 5. Kate 6. Minna. 7. Mildred. 8. Edna.
VI. 1. Trouble. 2. My mother. 3. A whistling boy (buoy). 4. Yesterday. 5. To-morrow. 6. His sister.

CORRECTION.

Two sad blunders crept into the Amusement Column for September. The last word of the Riddle, No. IV, should be *spoiled*, not boiled, and in *Hidden Birds* the second bird is *Crow*, not *Cross*. The editor will try not to be *cross*, though the puzzles are *spoiled; but* wasn't it "*two* bad"?

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

The editor calls attention to a point treated in the Mothers' Council for this month which can hardly be too often explained, being almost never understood. The difference between *governing* by authority and by argument and reason.

Probably there was never any one who understood children so well as Jacob Abbott, or more gentle and wise in his dealings with them; yet he always maintained that they must be *governed* by authority. If this point is referred to, readers almost always understand, or misunderstand it to imply a harsh imperious manner and severe punishment. Observe that the direct contrary is the case.

The editor has some corroborative evidence, in regard to Mrs. Wister's observations on the qualities of cats. The pretty trait of scrupulousness in regard to waking a sleeping person she has noticed in her own pussy. One very cold night in winter he opened, with his clever paw, the door of the laundry where he was shut for the night, and his mistress, who happened to be awake, heard a very tiny mew ascending the stairs, and coming nearer to her room. She remained quiet; and, when he entered, he did not know at first whether she were asleep or awake. Lying down on the floor, he began to claw and shake the edge of a rug near the fireplace, but gently. As she took no notice, he uttered a *pianissimo* interrogative mew. This she could not resist, and said, "Pussy, is that you?" Whereupon he joyfully ran, and, leaping on the bed, nestled beside her with grateful purrs. How can any one help loving a cat?

REQUEST FOR BOOKS.

Mrs. Helen M. Hutchinson, Cass Lake, Minnesota, asks for Lang and Butcher's translation of the Iliad and the Odysey. "The Little Maid of Maiden Lane," by Amelia Barr, an up-to-date rhetoric, and a copy of the Apocrypha, also the *New England Magazine*. (current numbers).

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

The editor has received an *anonymous* communication, intended as a criticism. Although the rule is to throw into the waste paper basket everything sent anonymously, she thinks that such a thing may sometimes happen from thoughtless ignorance, and would like to receive the sender's name and address.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange is developing Home Study work for the benefit of those without school facilities.

Arrangements will be made for lessons by correspondence in subjects interesting and necessary for those who are unable to leave their homes or who are far from centres of education.

Will those who would like to receive such instructions please send requests to Mrs. Ruth Peterson, 37 Ridgemont Street, Allston, Mass.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable. Do not offer odd numbers of periodicals.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter.

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